

Shimna Integrated College

Gifted and Talented Policy

The cornerstone of Shimna Integrated College policy on provision for the gifted and talented is the belief that every child is potentially gifted and talented, and that strategies to meet the needs of the gifted and talented include strategies which will benefit all our students. Fostering the gifts and talents of our students is a wholeschool matter, with every member of staff involved.

Aims

Our aim is to implement a robust policy for meeting the needs of the gifted and talented through strategies which will provide challenge and support to all our students.

Definitions

Gifted and talented students are those who are achieving or who have the potential to achieve, at a level substantially beyond their peer group. This achievement or potential may lie in one or more of the following areas:

- General intellectual ability;
- Specific academic aptitude;
- Visual and performing arts and sports;
- Leadership ability;
- Creative and productive thinking;
- Mechanical ingenuity;
- Special abilities empathy, understanding and negotiation.

The term Exceptionally Able encompasses students who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate extremely high levels of ability, compared to their peers across the entire population.

Identification of the Gifted and Talented

The prime consideration for the college is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn and succeed and to maximise their potential.

Gifted and talented students are identified through a web of methods, and will include the following:

- Teacher identification;
- Assessment results;
- Peer identification;
- Parent/carer identification;
- Identification by previous teacher, school, external organisation or agency;
- Self identification.

It is worth remembering that gifted and talented students can be:

- Good all rounders;
- High achievers in one area;
- Of high ability but with low motivation;

Of good verbal ability but poor writing skills;
Very able but with a short attention span;
Very able but with a learning difficulty or disability which masks their achievements;
Very able with poor social skills;
Keen to disguise their abilities.

Provision for the Gifted and Talented

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into all our plans. During review and evaluation of schemes of work and policies, provision for the most able will form a central element. We aim to:

Maintain an ethos where it is good to be bright;
Encourage all students to be autonomous learners with empathy for others;
Recognise achievement;
Be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender, religion and social circumstances on learning and high achievement;
Provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs;
Always provide work at an appropriate level with challenge and support;
Provide opportunities for all students to work with like minded peers and everybody else.

The School Register

All our students are on the register. This policy aims to open up access to provision for gifted and talented to all students, and also to avoid stigma sometimes associated with gifts and talents.

Types of Provision

High Expectations for Everyone

The single most powerful motivational force is the power of high expectations and establishing a self-fulfilling prophecy based on aiming high. While always providing support for all students in overcoming barriers to learning, every student is offered the opportunity to respond to challenge.

Classroom Differentiation

Teachers have high expectations of every student;
Tasks are designed to take account of levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding;
There are planned opportunities for extension work and for open-ended tasks;
There is access to the highest tier examination entries.

School Based Provision

School based clubs;
School societies and councils;
Student led initiatives;
Fast track groups;

Enrichment opportunities;
Opportunities for performance;
Artists in residence;
Specialist teaching;
Partnerships with other schools/further and higher education.

Out of School Provision

Every opportunity is taken to make links with local business and community partners to provide opportunities for gifted and talented students.

Personal Development

Classwork and work outside the classroom include a number of opportunities for students to participate in small and large groups, which will help develop their personal and social skills. We recognise that the way students operate in teams and support each other when discussing ideas or collecting resources and materials, supports their social, personal and emotional development.

Leadership and Participation

Every opportunity will be found to involve students in the running of the college, in project work and interaction with campaigns, student led organisations and making things happen.

Management

Management of provision for gifted and talented students operates through subject departments, and the centrally through the school development plan, PRSD targets, and self-evaluation.

Review

This policy document will be reviewed by the Education Committee of the Board of Governors.

Examples of Provision:

- Provision for further maths
- Maximising access to English literature, languages and three sciences
- QUB Junior, Senior and Sports Academies
- Sutton Trust Summer schools
- Nuffield Research Programmes
- Carson Bursaries in drama, art and MIA
- Academic curriculum base in all subjects for all students from year 8
- Student led groups: Amnesty International; GSA; Roots and Shoots
- Additional certification: Listening Ear; safeguarding training; coaching qualifications
- Science Olympiads
- UK Mathematics Challenge, junior, intermediate, senior and Kangaroo
- All-ability teaching, high aspirations for all with challenge and support
- Strong extra-curricular provision